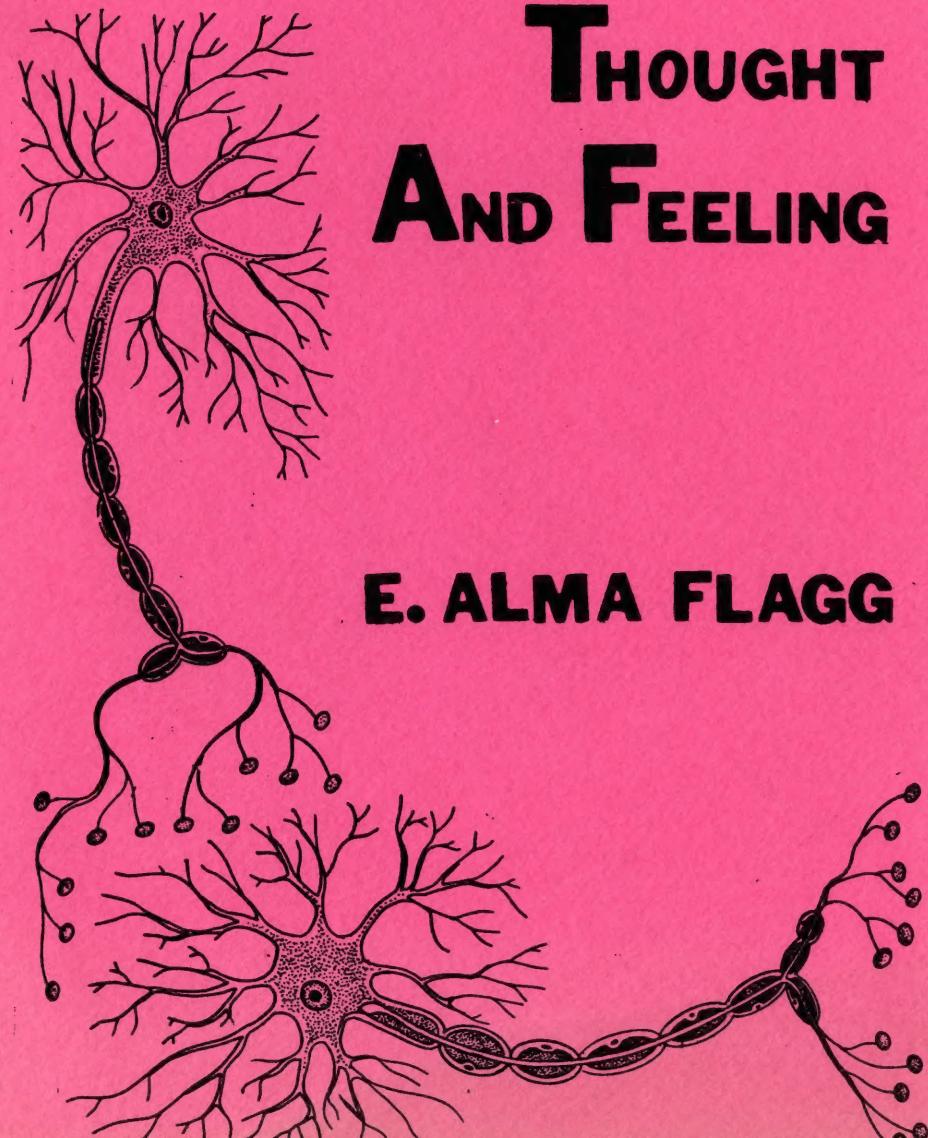


**TWENTY MORE
WITH
THOUGHT
AND FEELING**



E. ALMA FLAGG

44 Stengel Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07112

Salute

I salute you now, my strong black children,
My beautiful thinking, feeling, and doing children.
Your father and I have long loved you -
Our hearts filled with love for each
other and for you,
Our heads filled with ideas about
security,
About nourishment and adequacy,
We prepared you, in our way,
To venture out
To be about
The things that children must learn and do.

No word that hate was out there
Passed our lips.
No hint of hating others
Came from us.
Yet we knew you would face it,
And we put our trust in all
The beauty, strength, and goodness
We counted on within you.

Attacks and slights came to you -
You of dark skins and super-curly hair.
But although hurt and puzzled,
You continued proud and tall,
Meeting the challenges of all the days
And growing more beautiful and strong.

I salute you, we salute you,
And we thank God
That our way worked
So that you may continue, in the years ahead
In your way.

Started Early

Two little girls were six
And newly met in first grade class.
Where one was warmly brown
 with bright brown eyes
And dark hair in fluffy, puffy curls,
The other was coolly pale
 with clear blue eyes
And yellow hair in streaming tendrils.
Speaking, listening, singing, dancing
Were among the things they did
 nearby or together.
And only when the talk was
 on "after school" and "home"
Did the well-taught blonde child say,
"I can't have you over to my house;
We don't mix with colored."
And a dark-haired darling
 wondered, "What's that all about?"

Class Verse

A pedagogue known for her kindness
Forgave any pupil "behind-ness,"
But to one who would shirk
When she outlined the work
She reacted with note-to-be-signed-ness.

There once was a boy eating paste
Because he was pleased with its taste;
When they asked how he could,
He replied "It's so good
That to stick it is simply a waste!"

A "super" with wholesome intent
On good supervision was bent;
When he said "I'll observe,"
The poor 'teach' lost her nerve
And collapsed till the visit was spent.

A parent with eyes full of fire
Charged in with predictions **most** dire;
When he saw what was done
By his number one son,
He wondered, "Oh, what did I sire?"

Morning Frost

I like to see the early frost
On all the house-tops 'round;
It even shows on little blades
Of grass upon the ground.

Too bad it has to disappear
Beneath the climbing sun,
But I shall look again each day
Until the winter's done.

Snack Time

When I rush in from school
And put school clothes away,
I'm ready for a snack
Before I start to play.

It may be chocolate milk
Or fruit juice that I sip;
I might have golden toast
Or cookies, chocolate chip.

Of this I'm very sure:
I've been to school and back
And I could never have my fun
Without my little snack.

Puzzled

Tonsillectomy

I had a tonsillectomy,
Not like an appendectomy,
It's just to get your tonsils out,
And for a while you dare not shout.

You eat a lot of softish things,
You wonder what the next dish brings,
So hungry that you eat it all
And for some more you try to call.

Your voice makes people think you hurt,
Your hands you keep away from dirt;
When, finally, you're strong and well,
What fun it is to sing and yell!

I found it lying in the street
While on my way to school,
And in my class I blew it up
And thought that I was cool.

Some kids would look at me and laugh
So Teacher came to see
Just what it was that set them off
And boy! did she grab me!

Down to the nurse we almost flew,
They washed my mouth most much
And called my mother while I wondered
Why I was in Dutch.

Mad

My mother makes me go to school-
She say's that if I try
I'll really be somebody
But I fear that it's a lie.
My mother doesn't know it
And I wouldn't want her hurt-
She works so hard and sends me there
And then I'm classed as dirt.

I'm past The Farmer in The Dell
And dancing Hokey Pokey,
And boy! it really burns me up
To be addressed as "Smokey."
It was the v.p. used the word-
I can't accept his rule-
Some teachers feel the way he does
And sour kids on school.

From 1980 Into Eternity

Pondering: What would life
be without death?

The time is never right for
them to go--

People whom we love, admire,
respect, enjoy, and need.

Always there is something more
we planned to say or do-

When we found the time.....
Too many, too soon gone.

For us there was Adelbert Berry:
Teacher, father, friend,
Lover of music and giver of warm smiles.
For us was Malcolm Talbott:
Scholar, leader, wit,
Patron of the arts, involved in civic life.
For us was Thomasina Fitz Roy:
Adviser, mother, pal,
Believer in good living, sharing fun.
For us was Julian Ziegler:
Teacher, writer, family man,
Enjoying arts and letters all his days.

Too many, too soon gone-
But we are glad
That many days in many ways
Our paths were joined.

Old Mulberry Street

From Chestnut Street north went
that road of our childhood,
Fascinating all the way
From the tavern owned by one
classmate's folks,
Past a couple of factories
Fish market, shoemaker's shop,
hardware, grocery stores, laundry,
And a drug store with several
large, shining globes,
Filled with liquid -- red, yellow,
green, blue --
And the candy stores where a
penny bought
Lafayettes, lollilops, licorice, or
Mary Jane,
Or even a grab-bag of assorted
Sweet, crunchy, chewy morsels,
Or a nickel bar of brown or pink or white taffy;
And on through Chinatown
Where restaurants served strange foods,
To the markets which
We could only visit on Saturdays.
The Markets! outdoor extravaganza
Of meats, eggs, produce, fish, bread,
And, wondrous bright,
A great revolving cylinder
roasting peanuts-
What a smell! and what a taste!
Hot peanuts, m-m-m, delicious!
Oh! what an adventure a
trip to the markets
of Mulberry Street was!
Through busy crowds of people all intent,
And maybe bumping us about,
But it did not bother us.
The joy of being in the
middle of it all
Went home with us to
be savored
Till we went that way again.

No Cause for Tears

The mother of the bride did not cry-
Not while glowing at the loveliness
and liveliness
Of daughter slipping into Mother's
wedding gown.
(Oh, memories of that earlier
wedding day
When warming sun and white-specked
skies
Gave promises of happiness ahead.)
Not while the bridesmaids lightly
laughed together
As they improved upon Nature's and
each other's work.
Nor while the father of the bride
escorted her,
Handsome in his height and bearing
(Perhaps more so that on that
earlier wedding day).
Not when the vows were said
And a new couple faced a new path.
Why cry?
When you have chosen once
And been blessed with permanence
And a lovely daughter
Who may have similar life
And endurance after her own leap
Into the uncharted realm.
Rejoice!
Faith, hope, and love--these three--
Make our lives akin to the Eternal.

First Grandchild

Miracle! there you are
With perfect features all in place,
With busy limbs enjoying freedom
Clear voice raised expressing You,
Baby, there you are!

Miracle! gift of love
To those who wanted you,
Who do their all for health and happiness,
Who see in you a future that is great,
Baby, welcome here!

Miracle! for you are
Reminder of the fathers gone ahead,
Reminder of the mothers passed along,
Reminder of unbroken lines of life,
Baby, love to you!

On Time

With a fleet and strong-winged bird
To be my steed,
I'd like to circle
The sunny earth at noon,
Sailing through space,
Going just fast enough
To reach each place at noon.
When I reached my starting place
I'd wait for midnight, moonlight,
And on the wings of time, I'd go
To see the same sights
In the moon's reflected glow.

View

There! against the sky
Just at the hill-top
Is the end of the world!
Approach it slowly
On this smooth wide road-
Who knows what is on the other side?
Startling it is how the road
Leads to the hill-top
And ends so boldly, clear, against
the sky.

My Flower

I planted seeds for dahlias,
They were my very own;
I pulled each little weed out
And tossed away each stone.
The plants grew green and sturdy,
No flower came in view;
When I was most disheartened
I saw a bud or two.
One bud began to open-
It was a peachy shade;
It spread its pretty petals.
I hoped they'd never fade.
It lasted all the autumn
And how I loved it then!
So this year in the springtime
I'm going to plant again.

Missing My Cat

Lucky was his name,
His eyes were glowing green,
His tail was long and proud,
His fur had an ebony sheen.

He liked to chase his tail
Or wrestle with my fist
Or pounce upon a bug-
And now he's being missed.

Some accident or fight,
A germ he could not beat,
Has laid my Lucky low.
I miss him 'round my feet.

Way to Death

My People, Get Off!

My people, get off that big white horse,
Get off that certain road to death,
Get on with work, and love, and peace,
Bring life to life with every breath.

No one can get you off but you
Though others wait to give you aid;
Your will for health and strength and joy
Can move you forward unafraid.

Stop paying out your life for death,
Enriching those who speed your ride;
Get off that horse, no need to rush,
Death is as certain as the tide.

Children to Long-departed Father

Dad, we are older than you-
All three of us are.
When there were five us, all under age,
You left this earth.
Dad, you were forty-seven then -
And grew no older.
Two of us did not reach forty,
Sudden death prevailing.
But we three, the oldest three,
Have all passed forty-seven.

You knew your five youngsters,
Living, learning, working, playing;
And we knew our father,
Talented with paint, artistic with a pen,
And capable of lively tunes on a big harmonica.

We would know you. Would you know us?
What joys do you and our two brothers share?
And shall we gather at the river?

Favorite Dish

He ate them "coast to coast" -
The food he liked the most,
Hamburgers!

I owe a debt of gratitude to family and friends, including my students and staff, who have shared their thoughts and feelings with me. Special thanks go to Felecia Flowers, Virginia Glover, Patricia A. Lacey, Brenda Robinson-El, and Claire J. Whittaker.

E.A.F.